**Appendix 10:**

St Joseph’s RC School- Horwich- Addition to Safeguarding policy due to COVID-19:

**Context:**

From Friday 20th March 2020 parents/carers were asked to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and for schools to remain open only for those children of workers critical to the COVID-19 response - who absolutely need to attend.

Schools and all childcare providers were asked to provide care for a limited number of children - children who are vulnerable, and children whose parents are critical to the COVID-19 response and cannot be safely cared for at home.

St Joseph’s pastoral team identified these pupils and contacted all parents/carers about places at school. This included pupils who do not meet the Government’s criteria for ‘vulnerable’- but we know would need our support. St Joseph’s will also be open over the Easter break using staff volunteers to support those parents/carers who need our support during this time.

**Safeguarding:**

Although we are operating in a different way to normal, we will still have regard to the statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2).

We are still following these important safeguarding principles:

* The best interests of children must come first
* If anyone has a safeguarding concern about any child, they should continue to act on it immediately **(Contact Mr Singleton, Mrs Hawkrigg, Mrs Anderton and Mr Sylvester)**
* A designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy should be available at all times
* It’s essential that unsuitable people don’t enter the school workforce or gain access to children
* Children should continue to be protected when they are online

**Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):**

We will have a member of the safeguarding team on duty every school day throughout the lockdown period. The DSL- **Mr Singleton** will be available throughout this period including weekends. Should there be a concern and the DSL be unavailable for what ever reason- staff must contact Mrs **Anderton, Mrs Hawkrigg or My Sylvester. Mr McCabe or Mrs Yorke-Robinson** will also be available if needed.

**External Agencies:**

St Joseph’s pastoral team will still continue to work closely with relevant agencies during this period supporting our pupils. These may include; behaviour support, Educational Psychologists, SEN team, Social Care Team, LAC team. Staff may be asked to write a report and submit for child protection conferences or LAC reviews for example. Staff may, if able, engage in a virtual meeting to discuss pupils with relevant agencies.

**Pupil Contact:**

Staff will be setting pupils work via our online chosen platform- E-Praise. Staff have the facility to message pupils and respond to pupil queries. This contact must be professional and appropriate as in school following the staff code of conduct.

If e-mail contact is made with a pupil- all responses must be made by including another member of staff in the CC section for staff security.

Various members of staff will be at some point contacting pupils at home. If using private phones, staff must use ‘141’ before contacting parents for staff security. All parents/carers should know about any contact. Staff will need to phone parents/carers to contact the pupil.

Staff will continue to be alert to signs that a child may be at risk from what they say on the phone and make the referral into the safeguarding team.

We will make sure children know how to report any concerns they have back to our school, and signpost them to other sources of support too.

**Children and online safety away from school and college:**

It is important that all staff who interact with children, including online, continue to look out for signs a child may be at risk. Any such concerns should be dealt with as per the Child Protection Policy and where appropriate referrals should still be made to **Mr Singleton, Mrs Anderton, Mrs Hawkrigg, Mr Sylvester**, children’s social care and as required, the police.

Online teaching should follow the same principles as set out in the school code of conduct.

St Joseph’s will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

Pastoral staff/SLT must update CPOMS and alert others if appropriate to concerns and actions taken.

Below are some things to consider when delivering virtual lessons, especially where webcams are involved:

* No 1:1s, groups only
* Staff and children must wear suitable clothing, as should anyone else in the household.
* Any computers used should be in appropriate areas, for example, not in bedrooms; and the background should be blurred.
* The live class should be recorded so that if any issues were to arise, the video can be reviewed.
* Live classes should be kept to a reasonable length of time, or the streaming may prevent the family ‘getting on’ with their day.
* Language must be professional and appropriate, including any family members in the background.
* Staff must only use platforms specified by senior managers and approved by our IT network manager / provider to communicate with pupils

**Working with parents and carers**

We will make sure parents and carers:

* Are aware of the potential risks to children online and the importance of staying safe online
* Know what our school is asking children to do online, including what sites they will be using and who they will be interacting with from our school
* Make sure parents/carers have access to the safeguarding e-mail address
* Know where else they can go for support to keep themselves and their children safe online

**Mental health**

Where possible, we will continue to offer our current support for pupil mental health for all pupils. The pastoral team will be in weekly contact with various pupils who we deem to be vulnerable for a variety of different reasons.

We will also signpost all pupils, parents and staff to other resources to support good mental health at this time on a weekly basis.

When setting expectations for pupils learning remotely and not attending school, teachers will bear in mind the potential impact of the current situation on both children’s and adults’ mental health.